

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRISBA 00072 160053Z

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FM AMCONSUL BRISBANE

TO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

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SECSTATE WASHDC 557

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRISBANE 0072

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BBAK, AS

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND ON U.S. FIRM, UTAH DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

1. UTAH DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, 167 EAGLE ST., BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND, 4001, IS OWNED 90 PERCENT BY UTAH INTERNATIONAL INC. OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, AND 10 PERCENT BY THE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC THROUGH UTAH MINING AUSTRALIA LIMITED.

2. UDC HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN MINERAL EXPLORATION IN AUSTRALIA SINCE 1961. CURRENTLY IT OPERATES 4 OPENCUT COAL MINES IN THE BOWEN BASIN IN QUEENSLAND WHICH EXPORTED APPROXIMATELY 13 MN TONS OF COKING COAL IN 1974, PRIMARILY TO JAPAN UNDER LONG-TERM CONTRACT. IT IS AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST COKING COAL PRODUCER AND EXPORTER.

3. THE COMPANY WAS THE FIRST TO DEVELOP THE HUGE COAL RESERVES OF THE BOWEN BASIN, SPENDING APPROXIMATELY US\$400 MN IN DEVELOPMENT OF MINES, PORTS, TOWNSHIPS, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES. UDC EMPLOYS APPROXIMATELY 2,000 PEOPLE, AND HAS CREATED 2 NEW TOWNS IN THE SCRUB TO HOUSE ITS MINE EMPLOYEES.

COMMENT: UDC HAS RUN A TEXTBOOK OPERATION IN QUEENSLAND WHICH HAS PROVEN EXTREMELY EFFICIENT AND PROFITABLE. IT IS HIGHLY CONSCIOUS OF IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, WITH EXCELLENT RESULTS IN QUEENSLAND. ONLY TWO OR THREE AMERICANS IN ENTIRE AUSTRALIAN OPERATION. IN FEBRUARY 1974 IT WAS THE FIRST COMPANY TO DONATE TO THE RELIEF FUND AFTER BRISBANE'S RECORD-BREAKING FLOOD, PLEDGING US\$150.00. COMPANY LIKES TO DESCRIBE SELF

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AS INTERNATIONAL RATHER THAN MULTINATIONAL.

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